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ABSTRACT

This planning guide presents an interdisciplinary team approach for improving career and vocational programs for youths with disabilities. The approach is an interdisciplinary planning process that involves identifying those things desired for students (best practices) and then working to integrate those things within the current continuum of educational programing. The guide is organized into three sections. The first section includes the following: a brief rationale for using the guide, a list of persons who should use the guide, a description of how the guide should be used, and a description of the benefits resulting from use of the guide. The second section provides detailed steps of three phases of an interdisciplinary team process for making improvements in the delivery of career and vocational services to youths with disabilities. The three phases are team building, program improvement, and action planning. Worksheets and information sheets are included. The final section provides a list of resources team leaders may want to assemble. (KC)

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ED 361 566

Career/Vocational Preparation for Students with Disabilities: A Program Improvement Guide

AWARENESS EXPLORATION PREPARATION APPLICATION TRANSITION
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Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education
and
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Division of Public Schools
Florida Department of Education
Revised 1993

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Career/Vocational Preparation for Students with Disabilities

Program Improvement Guide

Bureau of Vocational Programs and Services
Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education
and
Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students
Division of Public Schools
Florida Department of Education
Revised 1993

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Career/Vocational Preparation for Students with Disabilities A Program Improvement Guide

by

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PREFACE

This planning guide presents an interdisciplinary team process for improving career/vocational programs for youth with disabilities. The process has been carefully structured to provide sufficient guidance to team leaders and team members, yet at the same time it is expected that each team will develop its own personality and interact with the process in different ways. It is expected that small districts, rural districts, urban districts, and large districts will use the guide; care has been taken to accommodate the needs and desires of all persons interested in the career/vocational preparation of youth with disabilities.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Development and preparation of this guide has been a collaborative effort involving many persons concerned with career/vocational education of students with disabilities. Special thanks are due to several people: Dr. Janet Adams, Ms. Michele Polland, and Dr. Sara Pankaskie of the Florida Department of Education for their support and persistence in asking the right questions during conceptualization and development of the guide; the State Council on Career Preparation for Students with Handicaps; the Exceptional Student Education and Vocational/Special Needs steering committees in Pasco and Leon Counties, Florida, for their valuable input toward the development of initial drafts of this guide, the State Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment (CBVA) trainers group for their willingness to explore the steps of this process and their valuable input toward a final product; plus the many people around the state who gave their time and expertise to review drafts of the guide. Ms. Elizabeth Braffet deserves special recognition for her help in the design and formatting of this guide. The best of luck as you begin the process of improving your career/vocational program for students with disabilities.

—Robert A. Stodden, Ph.D.

SECTION I
INTRODUCTION

This guide is for persons participating in the process of planning, assessing, and preparing youth with disabilities for career/vocational education. The purpose of this guide is to provide specific guidance for improving career/vocational programs for youth with disabilities. The approach is an interdisciplinary planning process that involves identifying those things desired for students (best practices), and then working to integrate those things within the current continuum of educational programming. The guide includes three sections.

Section I: Introduction includes

- a brief rationale for using this guide
- a list of persons who should use this guide
- a description of how this guide should be used
- a description of the benefits of using this guide.

Section II: Educational Program Improvement provides detailed steps of three phases of an interdisciplinary team process for making improvements in the delivery of career/vocational services to youth with disabilities.

- Phase I: Team Building
- Phase II: Program Improvement
- Phase III: Action Planning

Section III: Resources provides a list of suggested resources.

A. Rationale

Why should you participate in a planning process to improve career/vocational programming for youth with disabilities?

During the last ten years, educators have become increasingly aware that large numbers of youth with disabilities do not participate in the world of work after leaving school. In response to this problem, legislation and special federal and state funding priorities have contributed to many new ideas and innovations to assist youth with disabilities. The new ideas and materials are often introduced as "special" projects and are attached to the existing career/vocational program, rather than being integrated into programs and changing the existing personnel and practices. To assist change in career/vocational programming for youth with disabilities, school districts need assistance in identifying and inte-

grating new concepts into the existing program continuum. For youth with disabilities to benefit from an improved career/vocational program, it is necessary that the overall program reflect those improvements. This guide has been developed to help planning teams improve career/vocational programs by integrating new ideas and concepts into the existing program continuum.

B. Audience

Who should use this guide?

This guide is to be used by district- and/or school-level interdisciplinary teams whose membership reflects all aspects of the career/vocational preparation of youth with disabilities. Existing interdisciplinary teams should be used whenever possible, rather than structuring new planning teams. Team members may include persons in the following disciplines:

- exceptional student education
- vocational education and practical arts
- career education
- transition
- adult services
- counselor education
- work study
- community-based instruction
- supported competitive employment
- employers and community (JTPA, PIC, etc.)
- assessment/evaluation
- vocational rehabilitation.

The team should also include an administrator, school-level personnel, and parents or other family members of youth with disabilities. The team facilitator should be someone who can commit to leading the planning and program change process.

C. Use

How is this guide designed to help you?

The approach used in this guide is a team planning and program improvement process for persons working with youth with disabilities in career/vocational education. The guide provides a framework for interdisciplinary teams to follow as they identify program improvements and integrate them into

the career/vocational curriculum. Each phase of the planning framework is followed by a section to be completed by the team members to document their progress and outcomes to date. When completed, the guide will have served as a planning framework, and should continue to serve as an implementation guide as program improvement activities are monitored and further adjusted.

The educational improvement process in Section II of this guide is presented in three phases.

Phase I **Team Building Process**

Phase II **Program Improvement Process**

- What do we want for our students?
- What are those things that will give us what we want for our students?
- What do we currently do with our students?
- How can we match those things we want for students with current program elements?
- How can we integrate aspects of those things we want for students with activities in current program elements?

Phase III **Action Planning Process**

D. Outcome

What will you get from participating in this program improvement process?

Participation and follow-through with the program improvement process presented in this guide result in several benefits. The following outcomes are evident:

- Cooperative planning across subject areas, as well as with community and other support personnel, will facilitate student performance and program accountability.
- Cooperative planning is linked with assessment and with the student's instructional needs improving student performance outcomes.
- A continuum of programming activities sequenced in response to student learning needs and leading toward participation in valued adult roles is ensured.
- The efficiency of instruction and the extent to which skills and knowledge are learned by students are increased.

SECTION II

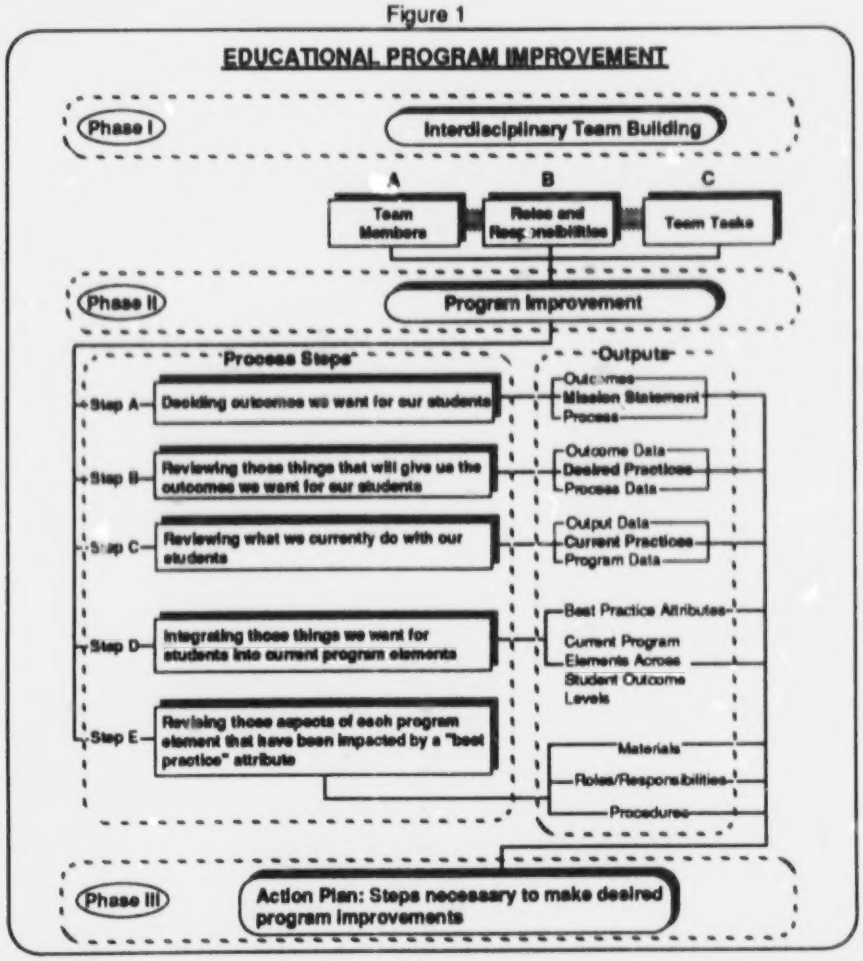
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

How do we decide what to improve and how do we make the changes?

The program improvement process has three phases. (See figure 1.) Phase I initiates activity with the necessary steps for building and maintaining an interdisciplinary team, including selecting team members, establishing roles and responsibilities, and determining routine tasks. Phase II includes a series of steps or activities that assists the team to restructure or revise program elements in a desired direction, thus setting the stage for program change. Phase III is the action planning component of the process, implementing a series of steps to assist the team and district/school participants to create desired program revisions.

To assist the team leader and other members of the planning team, the part of this section dedicated to each phase includes a brief overview, activities, and formatted space for the team to document its work.

Figure 1



Phase I
Team Building

Team-building activities should be originated by two or more leaders at the district level, and should specifically include the vocational education director and the exceptional student education administrator. Other key persons might be included in this initial step or the step might be part of a scheduled interagency council meeting. If an interagency council is currently in place in your district, consider accessing the membership of that team for program improvement activities.

Step A: Select team members

ACTIVITIES Those organizing a program improvement team should do the following:

1. Nominate or review as planning team members those persons from various disciplines that will be affected by improvements in the career/vocational program for youth with disabilities. Nominees should be knowledgeable in their fields, have good communication skills, and have demonstrated an interest in program improvements. Areas that might be represented on an interdisciplinary team are

- exceptional student education
- vocational education
- Career Blueprint
- Cooperative Consultation
- transition
- job placement/community-based instruction
- ESE/vocational curriculum
- ESE adult teacher
- family members
- occupational specialist
- cooperative education
- vocational rehabilitation
- Developmental Services
- Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health
- community employment (JTPA, PIC)
- other significant persons.

A district-level team (new or existing) should include persons with the knowledge and authority to represent their disciplines. Working groups that include school personnel might be formed to assist the district team in completing activities in Phase II and Phase III.

2. Agree on final list of potential team members.

3. Outline strategy for contacting potential members and securing their agreement to participate.

4. Formalize the team and its functions in the district administration.

5. Set date, time, and place for first team meeting.

Outcome List of interdisciplinary team members by name, discipline, or area represented and contact number

Case Example (Worksheet 1A can be found in Appendix I.)

Name	Discipline	Contact Number
Paula Jones	Exceptional Student Education	x 9645
Bill Smith	Vocational Education	x 4321
Ed Pine	Vocational Rehabilitation	843-9621
Nancy Vegas	Developmental Services	862-4162
Bob Pinus	Career Blueprint Rep.	x 2841
Cyndy Campus	Transition Specialist	x 4962
Randy Baca	Community Employment-JTPA	861-4951
Mary Ann Byers	Cooperative Consultation	x 4612
Billie Meyer	Community-Based Instruction	x 4192
Joan White	Parent Rep.	862-5941

First or Next Meeting
Date/Time /Place: Oct. 5,'91 9:00am District Conference Room

Step B: Choose team working procedures

Each team member brings to the meeting concerns and perspectives from his or her discipline that may serve as barriers to effective team operation and so must be considered when planning team meetings.

Typical procedures to consider when planning interdisciplinary team activities are

- selecting a team leader or facilitator
- ensuring commitment to active participation in team activities and decisions
- ensuring that team members appropriately represent the concerns and needs of their disciplines in the team process

- recognizing and addressing potential barriers to effective interdisciplinary team activities
- recognizing and addressing logistics for member attendance and participation.

OUTCOME List of working procedures and strategies for team activity

Case Example (Worksheet 1B can be found in Appendix I.)

Leader	will conduct team activities/use Robert's Rules of Order
Active Participation	all team members will participate equally in team activity
Representation of Discipline	members will represent the needs of their discipline or agency in team discussion & decision
Solving Disputes	problem solving activities will be used to resolve differences
Clearing Barriers	will seek clarification and consensus
Logistical Problems	will seek consensus across the team to resolve logistical issues

Step C: Identify roles and responsibilities

It is important that individuals organizing the program improvement team carefully define roles and responsibilities of the team leader and the members. Projected roles and responsibilities should be communicated to potential team members at the time they are asked to participate.

Typical facilitator/leader responsibilities are to

- facilitate equal participation and input from each member
- maintain a focus in planning purposes and objectives
- clarify team members' roles and responsibilities related to planning objectives
- contribute to consistency of activity.

Typical roles and responsibilities of team members are to

- provide input and feedback from their respective disciplines
- maintain commitment to team goals and responsibilities
- complete assignments and tasks per team's instructions
- provide support to other team members.

The initiators of the team planning process should establish a preliminary list of roles and responsibilities and share it with prospective members.

OUTCOME List of roles and responsibilities for team leader and members

Case Example (Worksheet 1C can be found in Appendix I.)

Team Leader	*Will lead the team from a facilitator role*
	- ensure equal participation and input from members
	- ensure attendance of members
	- maintain team purpose in all activities
	- assist start-up and completion of all activities
	- communicate expectations to the team
	- monitor team progress
Team Members	*Will participate in team activities*
	- provide input from respective disciplines
	- communicate with direct service programs
	- maintain commitment to team purposes
	- complete activities & tasks in a timely manner
	- attend all meetings ready to participate
	- support the resolution of problems

PHASE II
PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

An outcome of completing Phase I should be establishment of a program improvement team and the necessary working structure for the projected meetings. With the team in place, it is time to proceed to Phase II, program improvement.

The objective of Phase II is to assist team members in their review and analysis of desired and existing career/vocational program elements, so they can define specific program changes to be made in the school district.

Program improvement activities consist of five steps (see figure 1) that guide the team leader and members to

- clarify directions and outcomes as desired for students
- review best practices that will improve the program's ability to assist students in achieving desired outcomes
- review current program elements (or those things we do with students)
- integrate desired practices into existing program elements
- establish specific elements that will be revised in the career/vocational program continuum and integrate attributes of desired practices into selected program elements.

Each step of the program improvement process will include

- a brief introduction
- a statement of objective
- a team activity or activities to assist members in achieving the stated objective
- a list of working materials and resources
- a case example of outcomes
- worksheets for documentation of outcomes in Appendix I.

Step A: Clarify *our* mission *(What outcomes do we want for students?)*

INTRODUCTION This is usually the first meeting of the program improvement team and may require introductions (warm-up activities) and a clarification or re-affirmation of roles/responsibilities and operating procedures for team members. The meeting should be a district-level activity and should be scheduled so that all members can attend and participate. As preparation, the leader should review necessary materials and have them available for each member.

OBJECTIVE To identify the outcomes our students or clients are to achieve through participation in a career/vocational education program, resulting in the development of a mission statement

ACTIVITIES Team leader should do the following:

1. Have available for review state and district documents that refer to purposes/goals of career and vocational education, guiding principles for career/vocational programs, and student outcome data regarding post-school performance.

2. Discuss with planning team the objective of the meeting.

3. Distribute 3" x 5" index cards and have each team member write a response to "What outcomes do we want for students with disabilities/clients from a career/vocational program?" and, "What processes should be applied to achieve the desired outcomes?" (District mission statement and outcomes may be summarized on Worksheet 2A.)

4. Divide planning team members into groups of three or four persons and instruct each group to share their responses with the other members. Review copies of state and district goals or purpose statements to develop a draft mission statement within each small group.

5. Circulate between the groups, offering clarification and assistance in creating each mission statement. Assist team members to define key terms that are a part of each mission statement.

6. When needed time has elapsed, reconvene the entire team and have each group share its discussion and resulting mission statement.

7. Record group statements on a paper or blackboard, identifying common elements and leading a discussion toward development of a team mission statement. The reasons for common and uncommon elements across statements should be clarified and listed.

8. Record team mission statement and inform members that the statement will be used in subsequent planning sessions.

OUTCOME Mission statement to guide program improvement activities

Case Example (Worksheets 2 and 2A are in Appendix I.)

District Mission Statement

Career/vocational preparation programs will assist students with disabilities to become aware of, explore, and develop skills and behaviors necessary for participation in valued adult roles in their community (work, home/family, community, leisure/recreation, and personal maintenance).

Outcome Statements

- *will be employed at at least minimum wage with benefits*
- *will be enrolled in postsecondary education*
- *will participate in leisure/recreation activities in the community*
- *will independently participate in home/family roles*

Step B: Review best practices *(Which practices will give us the things that we want for our students/clients?)*

INTRODUCTION During the 1970s and 1980s many new ideas and program concepts were demonstrated as special projects to address the needs of youth preparing for the world of work. The State of Florida has participated in many of these best practice initiatives to improve career/vocational education outcomes for students with disabilities. The values underlying these initiatives and the activities developed through these projects are very relevant to the needs of students preparing for the world of work. It is time to explore best practice areas and post-school outcome and program effectiveness data to identify those things that will provide what we want for our students.

OBJECTIVE To review, research, and select those best practice areas listed in Appendix II, and others that fit the outcomes defined in the mission statement

ACTIVITIES Team leader should do the following:

1. Have available for team members an annotated list of best practice areas impacting on career/vocational programming for youth with disabilities (Appendix II). Also, support documents, program descriptions, guides, and program outcome data should be available for members to review and discuss (Section III).

2. Acquaint the planning team with the objective of the meeting.

3. Have each team leader select a best practice area and write (on a 4" x 5" card) a brief description of the attributes of the area as they relate to providing services to youth with disabilities.

4. Have team members list those attributes of the best practice area that match the developed mission statement.

(Activity steps 3 and 4 could be done in preparation for the meeting.)

(Team members should bring to the meeting support material for the best practice area.)

5. Divide planning team members into groups of three and have them explore the attributes of best practice areas that would assist students in achieving the outcomes implicit in the mission statement.

6. Reconvene the team and have each group share the description of each best practice area and the attributes of the area that fit the mission statement. As attributes of best practice areas are described, the entire team should give feedback. The shared information should be organized and recorded by the team leader in a format that allows all team members to review and explore. The format could be structured by age/grade level to assist members to visualize the role of best practice attributes in improving career/vocational programs. *(Worksheet 3 can be used for this purpose.)*

Outcomes A list of best practice areas and those attributes of each that fit the values expressed in the mission statement

Case Example (Worksheet 3 can be found in Appendix I.)

District Best Practice Areas
with Desired Program Attributes
(Those things that will give us what we want for our students)

Transition (II-A)	Accountability (II-B)
Postschool outcome focus	Accountable for outcomes
Family/Student involvement	Individualized planning
Functional instruction	Performance assessment

Interagency Coordin. (II-J)	Career Blueprint (II-K)
Formal Working Agreements	Integrates academic skills and vocational outcomes
Assists communication	Advocates a curricular sequence
Assists referrals to adult agencies	Awareness begins at elementary level

CBVA (II-L)	Cooperative Consult. (II-F)
Provides student performance information	Formal Working Agreements
Ongoing across the curriculum	Improves communication
Involves teachers	Assists referrals to adult agencies

Step C: Review current program elements as related to outcome data (enrollments, graduation rate, and follow-up statements) and program data (service delivery) *(What do we currently do with our students?)*

INTRODUCTION With the completion of Steps A and B, the team has decided outcomes they want for students (mission statement) and has reviewed those things that will result in what they want for students (best practice areas and their attributes). The next step in the program improvement process is to review what is currently being done with students. To do this, the program improvement team will need to review existing career/vocational program elements as well as available outcome and program data on students. Educational programs can be viewed as elements of activity that impact on student learning and students' eventual success in the world of work. The program elements used in this activity are

- **instructional settings and procedures** (courses, activities, or situations) that yield career/vocational outcomes for students
- **assessment procedures and activities** used to measure student progress toward career/vocational outcomes
- **planning procedures** used to place students in career/vocational programs. (These procedures usually include the Individual Educational Plan [IEP].)

The planning team should discuss types of personnel involved in each of the discussed program elements. Further discussion should focus on coordination of activities and information across each of the three program elements. Data concerning the number of students enrolled in exceptional student education and vocational education programs should be reviewed—as should program completer and post-school adjustment information—when considering the current status of program elements. These data are typically available through district education or government offices within your community.

OBJECTIVE To conduct a review of current data and activity for the three program elements as they apply to a specific population of students with disabilities (mild/moderate/severe or diploma/special program students)

ACTIVITIES Team leader should do the following:

1. Have available for review by team members copies of handbooks and program descriptions of current career/vocational activities; materials should focus on the three program elements to be reviewed.

2. Have available current data on student enrollment and program completion for exceptional student education and career/vocational education; available

data for student follow-up studies should be accessed as related to discussing program effectiveness.

3. Inform team members of the objective of this activity and that they will be looking at program outcome data across three program elements as they exist in the current career/vocational continuum of activity.

4. Using Worksheet 4A, team members should be grouped by grade or program outcome per the five levels illustrated. The team leader should explain the rationale for the program outcome levels using information from the *Career Blueprint* guidebooks referenced in the resource section. (See page 20.)

5. Each group should meet and fill in on Worksheet 4A information requested for each program element at the targeted outcome level; groups should be as descriptive as possible, using extra sheets of paper when necessary; also, groups may write in other program outcome column headings as they feel appropriate.

6. Using Worksheet 4B, each group should review available outcome and program data. Groups should discuss data reports and complete Worksheet 4B as a reference for use in activities 7 and 8 (below).

7. Lead members in a discussion of the following areas of possible concern related to the list of program elements, available outcome and program data, and best practice areas:

   - gaps or voids in the continuum
   - duplication of outcomes in the continuum
   - lack of coordination
   - inappropriate focus
   - lack of student involvement.

8. As an outcome of the activity, list areas of concern on Worksheet 4C, coding each of the need areas to its source.

9. Have team members apply existing student outcome data and program effectiveness information (findings from student follow-up efforts) to their descriptions of selected best practice areas.

REVIEW OF CURRENT PROGRAM ELEMENTS WITHIN A CAREER VOCATIONAL OUTCOME CONTINUUM

District Hollyfield Type of students Mild Disabilities

Grade or Outcome Levels

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Grade Level	Elementary	7th, 8th, 9th	10th, 11th	11th, 12th	Adult Adjustment
	A Awareness	B Exploration/ Integration	C Skill Development	D Skill Application	E Skill Maintenance
❶ List courses and activities producing student outcomes for each level.	-Career speakers in classes	-Technology Education -Career exploration wheel program -Career Day	-Vocational courses -Occupational skills courses -Functional academics	-Cooperative work experience -Functional academics	-On the job training -Follow-up -Support -Adult handicapped program
❷ List assessment activities used to measure outcomes at each level.	None	-Performance tests in shops -Exit tests -Vocational evaluation tests	-Course Tests	-Skill Performance lists	-None
❸ List planning procedures used at each outcome level.	IEP Meetings	IEP Meetings Initiate transition planning as part of IEP	IEP Meetings ITP transition planning Cooperative Consultation meetings	IEP Meetings Updating transition planning Meetings	Adult agency case conferences Adult handicapped program
List types of personnel involved for each level of each program element.	ESE Teachers	-Practical Arts instructors -Career Guidance Counselors -ESE Teachers -Vocational Eval	-Vocational instructors -ESE Teachers -Teachers -Career Counselors	-Job Coaches Coop Coordinators -Job Placement Coordinator -ESE Teachers	-Case Managers -Job Coaches -Adult handicapped instruction

Case Example (Worksheet 4A can be found in Appendix I.)

Case Example (Worksheet 4B can be found in Appendix I.)

Outcome and Program Data

Directions Please seek out and list below existing outcome data (What ways did students leave programs and what are they doing following their exit from the programs?) and program data (What programs are students in and how are they performing in those programs?). Input should be received by team members for the final list of outcome and program data.

I. Outcome Data (*sample*) (Other categories should be developed by team members.)

1. Student completers by program (1990) 189 Voc. progm. completers, Prgm. breakdown attached
2. Student dropouts by program (1990) 24 dropouts, prgm. breakdown attached
3. Student adjustment after school (1988-90) Sample of 348 students
   - a. Employment 48% full time/12% part-time
   - b. Postsecondary 15% enrolled
   - c. Home/family 62% living at home/12% head of household
   - d. Leisure/recreation 64% in community recreation activities
   - e. Community activity 60% function independently in community

II. Program Data (*sample*) (Other categories should be developed by team members.)

1. Student enrollment by program 380 students with disabilities enrolled in voc. programs
2. Student progress by program (1990) 68% pass voc. courses with C or higher
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Case Example (Worksheet 4C can be found in Appendix I.)

List of Needs and Concerns

Directions When discussing needs for and concerns about current career/vocational programs, team members should consider the following:

- best practice areas and attributes (Worksheet 3)
- current activity within each program element for each outcome level (Worksheet 4A)
- outcome and program data (Worksheet 4B).

As needs and concerns are listed on this worksheet, they should be assigned number/letter codes to identify the source and location of the concern from the three previous activities; team member consensus should be obtained for the final list of needs/concerns.

Source of Needs/Concerns

Codes			Needs/Concerns
Best Practice (Worksheet 3)	Program Element/ Outcome Level (Worksheet 4A)	Outcome/ Program Data (Worksheet 4B)	
II/K	2/A	-	No career awareness assessment occurs in elementary grades.
II/K	4/A	-	ESE teachers have limited awareness of careers.
II/K	1/A	-	Careers are not integrated into elementary courses.
II/K	1/B	1/2	Students with disabilities often don't access career exploration wheel program.
II/F	2/B	II/2	Students with disabilities lack basic skills to perform in shops.
II/A-L	3/B	II/2	Assessment information is not used in planning for students.
II/A	3/B	1/2	Student planning is not transition-outcome-focused.
II/L	3/C	-	No usable assessment information to make transition decisions is available.
II/F-H	1/C	I/I/2/3	Students with disabilities do not succeed in vocational courses.
II/F	3/D	II/2	There is little coordination between planning for students and instruction.
II/F	1/C,D	-	There is little coordination between academic instruction and vocational preparation.
II/A-C-D	1/E	I/3/C	There are insufficient adult support programs in place to meet the needs of students.

OUTCOME An agreed-on description of current program elements in a career/vocational continuum of outcomes for students with disabilities (Worksheets 4A and 4B) and an awareness of general program needs as coded to their source of concern (Worksheet 4C)

Definition of Outcome Levels (Worksheet 4A)

A. Awareness: student's development of a knowledge of attributes of the world of work
B. Exploration/Integration: student's practice of attributes from the world of work and understanding of how each attribute does or does not relate to them
C. Skill Development: student's development of work-related behaviors, related skills, and vocational skills required to participate in the world of work
D. Skill Application: student's use of work-related behaviors, related skills, and vocational skills required to participate in the world of work
E. Skill Maintenance: student's continued application and upgrading of work-related behaviors, related skills, and vocational skills required to participate and advance in the world of work

Step D: Integrate attributes of best practice into current program elements *(How do we input those things we want for students within current program elements?)*

INTRODUCTION Once an outcome-focused mission statement has been developed (Step A), best practice areas have been reviewed (Step B), and current program elements and outcome data have been examined (Step C), the interdisciplinary planning team is ready to plan for specific program improvement. Team output as recorded on Worksheets 2 (Mission Statement), 3 (Best Practice Areas with Desired Program Attributes), 4A (Current Program Elements by Grade Level), 4B (Outcome and Program Data), and 4C (Program Needs and Concerns) is used to decide which best practice attributes will be integrated into specific program elements, thus addressing an area of concern or need in the career/vocational continuum of educational service.

OBJECTIVE To integrate desired attributes of best practice concepts within current program elements found across the career/vocational continuum of educational activity

ACTIVITIES Team leader should do the following:

1. Have available for team members completed Worksheets 2, 3, 4A, 4B, and 4C to use in making program improvement decisions.

2. Inform team members of the objective of this activity.

3. Review output of previous team activities (could be requested before the actual meeting or the leader could review the output of Worksheets 2, 3, 4A, 4B, and 4C during the first phase of the meeting).

4. Using Worksheet 5 (Summary Matrix), have team members work in small groups to

   - list best practice areas and the desired attributes to be integrated into selected program elements
   - use needs and concerns listed on Worksheet 4C to select program elements to address for each best practice area
   - write a brief description (in the matrix box or on a separate piece of paper) of how each of the desired best practice attributes would be integrated into existing program elements. Each small group should discuss one or more best practice areas.

5. Use a summarizing procedure to assist each group in reporting their descriptions from Worksheet 5. All input should be summarized or organized for discussion and clarification.

OUTCOME A prioritized list and description of best practice attributes as integrated into current program elements (See case example on Worksheet 5.)

Step E: Revise program elements as they are impacted by best practice attributes *(What changes do we want to make in assessment, planning, instruction?)*

INTRODUCTION After completion of the Summary Matrix (Worksheet 5), team members are ready to discuss how parts of each program element (assessment, planning, instruction) will change. Changes to be discussed are to be taken from descriptions of best practice attributes in Step D.

The parts of program elements that are typically changed or improved are

- procedures/steps followed in the completion of a task or delivery of a service
- practices or roles/responsibilities required to implement procedures
- materials or forms used to implement procedures.

Case Example (Worksheet 5 can be found in Appendix I.)

Summary Matrix

Program Elements

Best Practice Concepts	**Attributes**	**Assessment**	**Planning**	**Instruction**
Transition	-Post-school outcome focus	-Develop a performance-based assessment procedure to follow an outcome-focused curriculum sequence	-Develop ways to focus IEP and instructional planning decisions on post-school outcomes	-Sequence and focus curriculum content in post-school outcome areas
Career Blueprint	-Integrates academic skills and vocational outcomes	-Assess student progress in basic skills within the context of vocational outcomes	-Develop ways for basic skill and vocational teachers to coordinate and plan together	-Integrate career outcomes into academic courses in the early grades -Coordinate basic skills development with vocational offerings
Cooperative Consultation	-Provides descriptions of student's strengths and weaknesses	-Refine student strengths and weaknesses information so that it is useful to instructors in vocational areas	-Develop a vehicle for student strengths and weaknesses to be shared with all instructors	-Serve as a means for ESE support personnel to help students in the context of vocational curriculum

Objective To revise those aspects (procedures, practices, materials) of each program element (assessment, planning, instruction) that have been impacted by one or more best practice attributes

Activities Team leader should do the following:

1. Have available for team members completed copies of Worksheet 5 and copies of best practice Helper Sheets from Appendix II.

2. Inform team members of the objective of this activity.

3. Review the information in Worksheet 5 (Summary Matrix) and focus team members on the prioritized list and description of best practice attributes to be integrated into current program elements.

4. Using Worksheets 6A, 6B, 6C (Revising Program Elements), team members work in three groups (assessment, planning, instruction) according to interest or expertise to

    - list best practice areas, with accompanying attributes, that are to be used to revise each program element
    - discuss how each best practice attribute would impact each of the three parts of a program element (procedure, practice, material)
    - complete descriptions of each program element part for each best practice attribute.

5. Have groups report to the team with a discussion of consistency or discrepancy across program elements (e.g., Are the revisions recommended for assessment consistent with those recommended for planning and instruction?). The team may want to make changes to the recommendations.

6. Facilitate so that team members achieve consensus concerning those changes/revisions that will be initiated for each program element.

7. Review recommended revisions in light of the initial mission statement developed by the team.

Outcome Consensus descriptions of program element revisions/improvements that are consistent with the team mission and prepared for action planning (See case example.)

Case Example (Worksheet 6A can be found in Appendix I.)

Revising Program Elements

I.

Assessment

Revisions or Changes Recommended

Best Practice Attributes	Procedures	Practices	Materials
Best Practice Areas: Transition — -Post-school outcome focus CBVA — Ongoing student performance information	-Determine and measure student's progress toward adult outcomes -Prepare steps for teachers to follow while collecting and using assessment information	-Have teachers, vocational instructors, and community-based personnel collect information regarding student performance as they move toward adult outcomes	-Develop performance rating forms that follow the career/vocational curriculum sequence toward adult outcomes

Case Example (Worksheet 6B can be found in Appendix I.)

Revising Program Elements

II

Planning

Revisions or Changes Recommended

Best Practice Attributes	Procedures	Practices	Materials
Best Practice Areas: Transition — Post-school outcome focus	-Initiate IEP meetings with a discussion of transition outcome areas -Develop steps to integrate instruction with long range transition goals	-Bring adult agencies and employers into the transition/education planning process -Initiate team planning and decision making with the involvement of instructors who know the student	Integrate a post school focus in the IEP forms -Develop IEP objectives in the context of transition outcome areas

Case Example (Worksheet 6C can be found in Appendix I.)

Revising Program Elements
III
Instruction

Revisions or Changes Recommended

Best Practice Areas	Best Practice Attributes	Procedures	Practices	Materials
Transition	Post-school outcome focus	-Delineate steps for coordinated team teaching -Delineate steps for bringing the community into school environments -Delineate steps for taking students into the community	-Work to have basic skill and vocational instructors deliver coordinated instruction focusing upon post school outcomes -Explore new team teaching roles	-Have instructors develop integrated curriculum materials -Develop materials within an instructional sequence leading to adult outcomes

PHASE III
ACTION PLANNING PROCESS

An outcome of completing Phase I (Team Development) and Phase II (Program Improvement) activities should be a clear description of revisions or changes recommended in existing procedures, practices, and materials for the three program elements—assessment, planning, and instruction (per Worksheets 6A, 6B, and 6C). With the completion of Steps A through E in Phase II, you are ready to proceed to Phase III, preparation of an action plan to make the desired program revisions.

The action planning process consists of four parts (per Worksheet 7) that assist the team facilitator and members to

- list the steps necessary to make program improvements or revisions
- develop a time frame for the completion of each step
- decide which person(s) or agency(s) has responsibility for each step
- list resources or assistance needed to complete each step.

This section of the planning guide provides a structured process for team members to follow in order to complete action-planning activities. Further, the section summarizes the planning process and discusses follow-through and evaluation activities that teams might consider as they proceed toward implementation of their action plans.

Step A: What are the steps necessary to make the revisions/ improvements we want for students?

OBJECTIVE To discuss and list steps required to make desired revisions to program elements (Revisions in procedures, practices, and materials can be described within each of the three program elements.)

ACTIVITIES Team leader should do the following:

1. Have available copies of completed Worksheets 6A, 6B, and 6C, as well as copies of completed Worksheets 3, 4, and 5 (Appendix II).

2. Inform team members of the objective of this activity.

3. Review the information in Worksheets 6 A, 6B, and 6C (Revising Program Elements) and have team members focus on steps necessary for making recommended changes.

4. Have team members work in three groups (assessment, planning, instruction) to

   - explore the current status of each program element as described on Worksheet 3 and the desired status as outlined on Worksheets 6A, 6B, and 6C
   - discuss and list the action steps required to make recommended changes or revisions for each program element
   - develop a sequenced list of steps that are necessary to make recommended changes for each program element
   - complete a list of steps on Worksheet 7.

5. Have groups report for purposes of

   - obtaining input from other team members
   - discussing means of combining steps and tasks across the three program elements (assessment, planning, and instruction).

6. Using Worksheet 7, facilitate movement of team members toward agreement concerning the implementation steps for each program element.

Steps B, C, and D: What are the timeframes, persons or agencies responsible, and resources needed to complete each of the action plan implementation steps?

OBJECTIVE To discuss and determine timelines, roles and responsibilities, and means of support needed to make desired revisions to program elements

ACTIVITIES Team leader should do the following:

1. Work with team members to decide on the overall timeframe in which the desired changes will be made (six months, one year, five years, etc.).

2. Within the overall timeframe, assist team members to specify completion dates for each step of the action plan. (Timelines should be realistic and sequenced in the order necessary to complete the overall plan, per Worksheet 7.)

3. Assist team members to designate persons/agencies to be responsible for completing specific action steps, per Worksheet 7.

4. Assist team members to determine specific supports (resources or expertise) that might be necessary to complete each step of the action plan, per Worksheet 7.

OUTCOME Team consensus on an action plan to guide implementation of desired program revisions

SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

This program improvement guide, focusing on the career/vocational preparation of students with disabilities, has assisted an interdisciplinary team to

- organize into a productive working body
- participate in a series of team activities to plan improvements in current educational programs for students with disabilities
- prepare an action plan to implement desired changes.

Participation in these steps by a district or school level program improvement team should yield a revised program that includes a number of best practice attributes reflecting the overall outcomes or mission of those outcomes the district desires for students with disabilities.

As the district implements steps delineated in the action plan, the program improvement team should prepare a rigorous evaluation procedure to determine effectiveness and impact of revised procedures, practices, and materials. Pilot evaluation data should be used to make further revisions and improvements, assisting programs to remain responsive to the needs of students with disabilities as they prepare to enter the world of work.

Action Plan

Directions: Please complete this action plan for each revision of a program element worked on. The Action Plan should serve as a guide to implement program improvement activities in your school or district.

Selected Program Element

Resources or Assistance Needed to Complete Step	Person/Agency Responsible	Date Each Step Will Be Completed	Steps to Make Recommended and Program Element Revisions
-Teacher time at the school level to participate in inservice and development activities	ESE/vocational directors	Sept. 30, 1991	1. Inservice for teachers concerning the proposed revisions to be made in assessment practices
-Coordination/technical assistance time	School-based instructors	Oct. 30, 1991	2. Develop and format sample performance rating forms
-Coordination/technical assistance time	School-based instructors	Nov. 30, 1991	3. Define steps for teachers to follow to collect performance-based information
-Teacher meeting time	ESE/vocational directors	Dec. 30, 1991	4. Delineate those courses and activities that will provide performance-based information leading to post-school outcomes

Case Example (Worksheet 7 can be found in Appendix I.)

APPENDIX I

Worksheets

1A Team Members
1B Team Operating Procedures
1C Team Members Roles and Responsibilities

2 District Mission Statement
2A Outcome Statement

3 Best Practice Areas and Attributes

4A Current Program Elements
4B Outcome and Program Data
4C Needs and Concerns

5 Summary Matrix

6A Revising Program Elements—I. Assessment
6B Revising Program Elements—II. Planning
6C Revising Program Elements—III. Instruction

7 Action Plan

Worksheet 1A

List of Interdisciplinary Team Members by Name, Discipline, or Area Represented and Contact Number

Name	Discipline	Contact Number

First or Next Meeting
Date/Time /Place: _____ _____ _____

Worksheet 1B

List of Working Procedures and Strategies for Team Activities

Worksheet 1C

List of Roles and Responsibilities for Team Leaders and Members

Worksheet 2

District Mission Statement

Worksheet 2A

Outcome Statement

Worksheet 3

District Best Practice Areas
with Desired Program Attributes
(Those things that will give us what we want for our students)

Worksheet 4A

REVIEW OF CURRENT PROGRAM ELEMENTS WITHIN A CAREER VOCATIONAL OUTCOME CONTINUUM

District _____ Type of students _____

Grade or Outcome Levels

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Grade Level	Elementary	7th, 8th, 9th	10th, 11th	11th, 12th	Adult Adjustment
	A Awareness	B Exploration/ Integration	C Skill Development	D Skill Application	E Skill Maintenance
❶ List courses and activities producing student outcomes for each level.					
❷ List assessment activities used to measure outcomes at each level.					
❸ List planning procedures used at each outcome level.					
List types of personnel involved for each level of each program element.					

Worksheet 4B

Outcome and Program Data

Directions Please seek out and list below existing outcome data (What ways did students leave programs and what are they doing following their exit from the programs?) and program data (What programs are students in and how are they performing in those programs?). Input should be received by team members for the final list of outcome and program data.

I. Outcome Data (*sample*) (Other categories should be developed by team members.)

1. Student completers by program _____

2. Student dropouts by program _____

3. Student adjustment after school _____

   a. Employment _____
   b. Postsecondary _____
   c. Home/family _____
   d. Leisure/recreation _____
   e. Community activity _____

II. Program Data (*sample*) (Other categories should be developed by team members.)

1. Student enrollment by program _____

2. Student progress by program _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

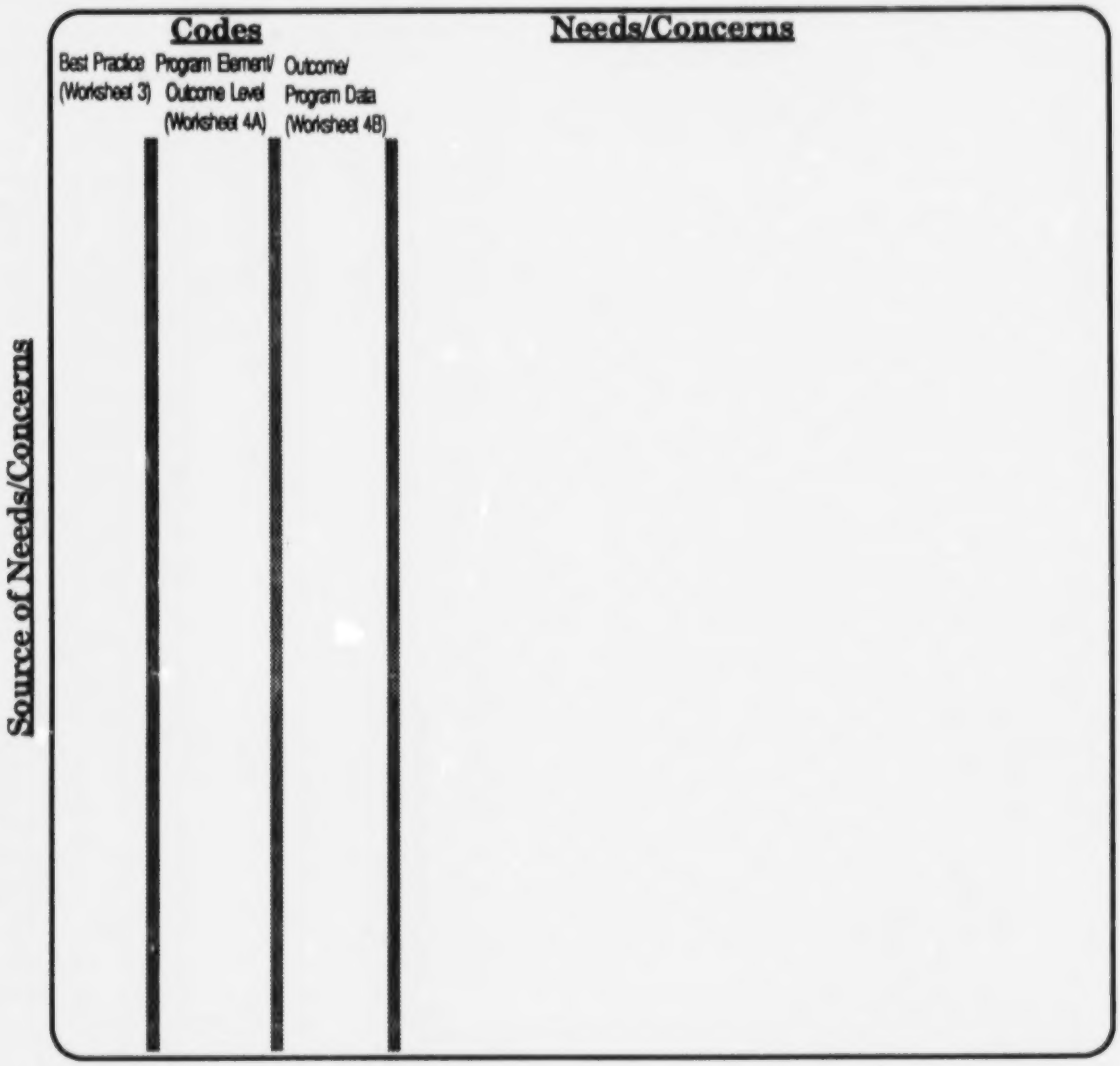
Worksheet 4C

List of Needs and Concerns

Directions When discussing needs and concerns about current career/vocational programs, team members should consider the following:

- best practice areas and attributes (Worksheet 3)
- current activity within each program element for each outcome level (Worksheet 4A)
- outcome and program data (Worksheet 4B).

As team needs and concerns are listed on this Worksheet, they should be assigned number/letter codes to identify the source and location of the concern from the three previous activities; team member consensus should be obtained for the final list of needs/concerns.



Worksheet 5

SUMMARY MATRIX

Program Elements

Best Practice Concepts / Attributes	Assessment	Planning	Instruction

Worksheet 6A

Revising Program Elements

I.

Assessment

Revisions or Changes Recommended

Best Practice Attributes	Procedures	Practices	Materials
Best Practice Areas			

Worksheet 6B

Revising Program Elements
II
Planning

Revisions or Changes Recommended

Best Practice Attributes	Procedures	Practices	Materials

Best Practice Areas

Worksheet 6C

Revising Program Elements
III
Instruction

Revisions or Changes Recommended

Best Practice Attributes	Procedures	Practices	Materials

Best Practice Areas

Action Plan

Directions: Please complete this action plan for each program element revision your team has decided to work toward. The action plan should serve as a guide for you to implement program improvement activities in your school or district.

Selected Program Element

Steps to Make Recommended and Program Element Revisions	Date Each Step Will Be Completed	Person/Agency Responsible	Resources or Assistance Needed to Complete Step

Worksheet 7

APPENDIX II

Best Practice Areas
Helper Sheets I and II

Helper Sheet I

Best Practice Areas

Helper Sheet II-A: Transition from School to Community Roles

Helper Sheet II-B: Accountability

Helper Sheet II-C: Supported Competitive Employment

Helper Sheet II-D: Education for Adults with Disabilities Program

Helper Sheet II-E: Tracking System to Impact Instructional Programs

Helper Sheet II-F: Cooperative Consultation

Helper Sheet II-G: Comprehensive School Improvement Initiative

Helper Sheet II-H: Mainstreaming Special Needs Students into Vocational Programs

Helper Sheet II-I: Business/Education Partnership

Helper Sheet II-J: Interagency Coordination

Helper Sheet II-K: Blueprint for Career Preparation

Helper Sheet II-L: Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment (CBVA)

Helper Sheet II-M: Community-Based Instruction (CBI)

Helper Sheet II-N: Cooperative Work Experience

Helper Sheet II-O: Working with Families

Helper Sheet II-P: Multiple Exit Points in Vocational Education

Helper Sheet II-Q: Dual Enrollment

Helper Sheet II-R: The Linking Education and Employment (LEE) Program

Helper Sheet II-S: Tech Prep

Helper Sheet II-T:

Helper Sheet II-A

Best Practice Concept: Transition from School to Community Roles

DEFINITION The preparation, linkage, and reception of students as they move from an educational environment to valued roles in adulthood

ATTRIBUTES

Post School Outcome Focus

- consists of long range planning activities focused upon the needs of students in postsecondary school environments (transition planning must be incorporated into IEP's, beginning at ages 14-16, or younger as appropriate)

Long Range Focus

- focuses IEP goals and objectives upon long range post-school skill and behavior needs

Family and Student Involvement

- requires informed family and student participation and input

Interagency Cooperation

- requires input from agencies and representatives in the adult community in planning, programming, and teaching students

Performance Assessment

- requires ongoing performance information concerning students' progress toward targeted transition goals

Functional Instruction

- requires teachers to focus upon and teach skills and behaviors students need to function as adults in the community

Helper Sheet II-B

Best Practice Concept: Accountability

DEFINITION To improve student performance outcomes by defining what students need to know and assessing how well they have learned

ATTRIBUTES

Individualized Planning and Instruction
- meets individual student needs

Needs Assessment
- establishes status toward desired outcome

Accountable for Outcomes
- holds high expectations
- identifies school as the unit of accountability (School and its program are accountable for student learning.)

Focus on Outcomes
- establishes outcome measures for what students should know and can perform at various times during school and after leaving school

Performance Assessment
- includes methods of assessment that reflect how well students have learned and can do

Interagency Cooperation
- includes partnerships with communities, social service agencies, and families

Family/Community Focus
- increases meaningful participation of teachers, parents, and community/business people in setting education goals

Helper Sheet II-C

Best Practice Concept: Supported Competitive Employment

DEFINITION Competitive work paid at or above minimum wage that provides regular opportunities for interaction with nondisabled co-workers or the public and is maintained by ongoing support services; appropriate for persons with moderate and severe disabilities who would be unable to maintain the employment without ongoing support services

ATTRIBUTES

Functional Instruction

- uses functional community-referenced curriculum

Community/Family Focus

- restructures educational program in elementary through secondary school levels
- establishes community-based instruction and employment training
- involves families in decision making

Interagency Cooperation

- develops interagency agreements for post-school employment follow-along service
- establishes interagency linkages

Post School Outcome Focus

- incorporates transition planning in the IEP process

Ongoing Support

- uses job coaches and other support to train and maintain students in competitive employment settings

Helper Sheet II-D

Best Practice Concept:
Education for Adults with Disabilities Program

DEFINITION A local planning process to assist and support implementation of adults with disabilities programs, thus encouraging adults with disabilities to participate in educational programs to increase their daily living skills, academic skills, and economic independence

ATTRIBUTES

- requires an individual adult education plan
- delineates special supports, equipment or training required for the learner to be successful
- identifies specific jobs for which the student will be prepared
- assumes program exit is appropriate when the student has completed expected program outcomes per the written individual adult education plan
- assists access into educational programs for adults with disabilities
- establishes a new cost category to provide weighted funds to support adult students enrolled in the adults with disabilities program
- includes classes from adult general education, vocational job preparatory, vocational supplemental, and vocational preparatory
- allows adults with disabilities to achieve at their own pace in educational programs

Helper Sheet II-E

Best Practice Concept: Tracking System to Impact Instructional Programs

DEFINITION To conduct follow-up tracking of students one-to-three years after they leave school, generating outcome data regarding adult performance to be used to revise curricular and program options

ATTRIBUTES

- provides a mechanism for following students after school exit to determine the extent of adult adjustment
- provides an outcome focused data base
- establishes an Instructional Program Work Group (IPWG) to improve program and address barriers based on the outcome data
- provides a mechanism for ongoing measurement and improvement of programs

Helper Sheet II-F

Best Practice Concept: Cooperative Consultation

DEFINITION An interactive process though which exceptional education, basic, and vocational education teachers generate creative solutions for students encountering difficulty in the school setting

ATTRIBUTES

- provides a basic description of student's strengths and weaknesses
- provides a basic description of general education expectations
- provides a format for addressing student needs within the context of core educational expectations
- provides a vehicle to define and support the special needs of students within the context of core educational expectations
- assists and supports interaction between regular education instructors and exceptional education teachers
- provides a format for sharing information about students across instruction and disciplines
- provides a monitoring and ongoing review process to support the special needs of students

Helper Sheet II-G

Best Practice Concept: Comprehensive School Improvement Initiative

Definition A process of identifying the outcomes we want for students, improving programs to obtain the outcomes we want for students, and being accountable for outcomes as defined for students

Attributes

- bases decisions on results of needs assessment
- develops school/program focused improvement activities
- provides student outcome focus to decisions
- promotes collaborative decision making
- promotes parent/community involvement
- promotes measurable school-based accountability
- establishes collaborative community efforts
- focuses on outcomes rather than process
- focuses on achievement rather than compliance
- focuses on results rather than requirements
- establishes quantifiable indicators of improvement
- includes appropriate evaluation procedures

Helper Sheet II-H

Best Practice Concept: Mainstreaming Special Needs Students into Vocational Programs

DEFINITION Accessing and supporting the successful participation of students with disabilities in a sequence of regular vocational educational programming consisting of career awareness, career exploration, vocational preparation and placement/maintenance in the world of work

ATTRIBUTES

- allows students to experience valid vocational preparation experiences in a sequenced program leading to further postsecondary training and/or community employment

- makes available to students with disabilities the expertise and equipment required for training and participating in vocational education and the world of work

- provides a context to support students with disabilities in setting with their age-appropriate peers

- allows the use of vocational mainstream cost factor to support secondary ESE students in vocational education when they require special services, aids, or equipment

Helper Sheet II-I

Best Practice Concept: Business/Education Partnership

DEFINITION Schools and community businesses working together to develop guidelines and activities that combine their resources to achieve mutually beneficial objectives

ATTRIBUTES

- shares time and talents of education, business, and community persons
- provides community-business linkage to focus on preparation of students for adult roles in the community
- provides a community focus for educational goals and objectives
- increases awareness of the world of work and community living requirements for schools and students
- integrates educational programs with community service programs
- facilitates linkage as students move from educational programs to community adult roles
- combines human resources, thus increasing efficiency and output of programs toward a common goal

Helper Sheet II-J

Best Practice Concept: Interagency Coordination

DEFINITION Provides an opportunity to strengthen cooperative relationships and to link educational, rehabilitative, and related employment service programs to meet the needs of secondary school students with disabilities

ATTRIBUTES

- consists of formal, cooperative working agreements between vocational education; exceptional student education; vocational rehabilitation; developmental services; alcohol, drug abuse and mental health; and other agencies at the local/regional level

- improves communication and collaborative efforts to assist students preparing for the world of work

- assists the referral and access to vocational rehabilitation and other adult services

- assists the participation of students with disabilities in vocational education programs

- eliminates duplication and conflicting services in the areas of assessment, case management, placement, and skill development

Helper Sheet II-K

Best Practice Concept: Blueprint for Career Preparation

Definition Provides a framework for educators to prepare youth and adults to successfully enter and remain in their chosen fields of work, including preparation for postsecondary education

Attributes

- seeks to integrate academic skills and vocational outcomes for students (applied learning)

- advocates a sequence of curricular activities starting at kindergarten through elementary school (self awareness and career awareness), middle school (career oriented goals), high school (applied curriculum), and post secondary education to gain total employment

- involves partnerships with families, businesses, and community

- advocates career planning prior to high school with clear goals to be set by students, families, and school advisors

- advocates the linkage of elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education programs to prepare students for the needs of the community workforce

- develops eighth grade plan to establish long-term career goals and to plan secondary coursework

Helper Sheet II-L

Best Practice Concept: Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment (CBVA)

DEFINITION A procedure for determining the career development and vocational instruction needs of students as they perform tasks in a career/vocational curriculum sequence

ATTRIBUTES

- provides ongoing information about a student's performance in career/vocational curriculum sequence
- provides information to make transition planning decisions, to determine IEP career/vocational goals and objectives, and to assist instructors to meet student needs
- provides an ongoing process of observing and assessing student's performance
- provides an integrated procedure in the career/vocational curriculum sequence
- obtains information from educators that know students best
- provides assessment information in the context of the curriculum, assisting instructors to make adjustments in content, method, etc.
- helps focus planners upon career/vocational student outcomes

Helper Sheet II-M

Best Practice Concept: Community-Based Instruction (CBI)

DEFINITION Instruction that is planned and implemented based on students' needs in their community; may include community simulation experiences in the classroom as well as training in real life settings

ATTRIBUTES

- emphasizes age appropriate, functional, and regularly scheduled instruction
- maximizes student's time spent in the community
- involves parents in process
- requires documentation on IEP

Helper Sheet II-N

Best Practice Concept: Cooperative Work Experience

DEFINITION The acquisition and application of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in an occupational field, specifically, gaining knowledge in performing job tasks, general knowledge for successful employment, building productive work attitudes, acquiring human relationship skills through supervised work experiences and, acquiring knowledge for choosing a vocation and/or vocational training programs (The terms "OJT" and "work experience" may refer to general activities for students in a real work setting or in specific vocational courses/programs (some paid, some not paid.)

ATTRIBUTES

- combines classroom studies with occupational experiences in the community
- provides for experiences that teach effective skills of employment
- focuses on the role of the individual student as a worker
- ensures that activities are in accordance with federal wage and hour requirements

Helper Sheet II-O

Best Practice Concept: Working with Families

DEFINITION School and agency personnel linking with families to increase communication, cooperation, planning, and services for students with disabilities

ATTRIBUTES

- increases parent involvement in writing and implementing IEPs, especially those for students in need of transition services
- involves parents and students as full participants of the IEP, and IWRP teams (education and service agencies)
- provides all "players" with increased knowledge about roles, responsibilities
- supports families in making informed choices based on adequate knowledge
- increases long range planning for individuals with disabilities
- recognizes importance of home visits

Helper Sheet II-P

Best Practice Concept: Multiple Exit Points in Vocational Education

DEFINITION Selected sets of course standards within a vocational job preparatory program that provide the opportunity to complete a modified program and to develop marketable skills leading to competitive employment

ATTRIBUTES

- involves interdisciplinary planning to target student outcomes(s)
- results in a modified program reflecting a student's interests, abilities, and special needs
- uses IEP process to select course standards
- includes continuous review of student progress to maximize the student's potential
- increases flexibility in transition and career planning; provides a realistic career ladder
- responds to accountability and accessibility mandates

Helper Sheet II-Q

Best Practice Concept: Dual Enrollment

DEFINITION A system to allow high school students to take postsecondary courses in order to provide them with a broader range of vocational options and enroll them in postsecondary education while still secondary students

ATTRIBUTES

- allows students to enter postsecondary education a year earlier
- requires articulation agreements between secondary and postsecondary institutions
- offers more choices of vocational programs for students which can lead to increased career opportunities
- familiarizes students with the environment and demands of postsecondary education
- provides a positive learning environment, especially for students who benefit from adult student role models
- allows students to earn postsecondary hours or college credit

Helper Sheet II-R

Best Practice Concept:
The Linking Education and Employment (LEE) Program

DEFINITION A dropout retrieval initiative designed to combine academic instruction with structured workplace supervision in order to meet the needs of individuals who have left the school system prior to graduation

ATTRIBUTES

- provides academic instruction needed to obtain a high school diploma or GED

- provides structured workplace experience to develop/enhance employability and technical skills, as well as reinforce academic skills

- enlists adult education, vocational education, and business in broad-based active partnership for dropout retrieval

- emphasizes the link between education and employment to make learning relevant

- includes mentoring, counseling, and parental participation components

- emphasizes mastery learning through computer-assisted performance-based instruction

Helper Sheet II-S

Best Practice Concept: Tech Prep

DEFINITION A combined secondary and postsecondary program which (1) leads to an associate degree or two-year certificate; (2) provides technical preparation in at least one field of engineering technology, applied science, mechanical, industrial, trade, agriculture, health, or business; (3) builds student competence in mathematics, science, and communications through a sequential course of study; and (4) leads to placement in employment

ATTRIBUTES

- starts students on their chosen career track earlier, in eleventh or twelfth grade, followed by two years postsecondary
- builds on career clusters and technical education systems study
- helps students devleop broad-based competence in a career field
- emphasizes mid-range occupations requiring some postsecondary education but not necessarily a baccalaureate degree
- combines common core of learning with technical education
- has a foundation of applied academics
- is developed by teams of secondary and postsecondary education personnel, including community college personnel
- focuses on continuity in learning and close curricular coordination

Helper Sheet II-T

Best Practice Concept:

DEFINITION

ATTRIBUTES

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SECTION III
RESOURCES

This section of the Program Improvement Guide has been provided to help team leaders and members assemble resources within each of the best practice areas, as abstracted in Appendix II. The team leader is encouraged to structure this section according to the best practice areas, using dividers and labels to separate material.

The following are some of the many materials that may be included in the resource section:

- position papers and fact sheets as developed and distributed by the Florida Department of Education
- curriculum materials across the areas of career guidance, vocational education, exceptional student education, and academic content areas
- assessment materials used to measure student performance in career/vocational education
- planning materials used to organize student career/vocational preparation
- reports on the effectiveness of programs for students with disabilities
- reports on the success of students after leaving secondary school career/vocational program.

Affirmative action/equal opportunity employer

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